

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration of this application in light of the above amendments and following comments is courteously solicited.

Initially, Applicants have submitted concurrently herewith a supplemental Information Disclosure Statement in response to the examiner's objection raised on Page 2 of his office action of February 13, 2006. Applicants respectfully request that cited Japanese Patent Application publication JP 2001-093017 which is the subject of the Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement be fully considered by the examiner.

Applicants wish to acknowledge the indication of allowance of previously submitted claims of 37-43. Applicants submit for the examiner's consideration new claims 44-57. It is submitted that claims 44-57 are in condition for allowance for the reasons set forth hereinbelow.

The examiner indicated the subject matter of previously submitted and now cancelled dependent claim 28 as being allowable. See Page 4 of the office action of February 13, 2006. New independent claim 44 is original claim 28 rewritten in independent form and includes all of the limitations of base claim 27. Accordingly, independent claim 44 and claims 45-50 which depend either directly or indirectly from new independent claim 44 are now allowable.

New independent claim 51 corresponds to now cancelled dependent claim 36 rewritten in independent form. Dependent claim 36 was indicated by the examiner to be allowable as set forth on Page 4 of the office action dated February 13, 2006. Accordingly, independent claim 51 and dependent claims 52-56 which depend either directly or indirectly therefrom are likewise allowable.

In light of the examiner's previous indication of allowance of claims 37-43 and the indication of allowable subject matter

of new independent claims 44 and 51, it is submitted that all of the claims as pending are now in condition for allowance and an early indication of same is respectfully requested.

An earnest and thorough attempt has been made by the undersigned to resolve the outstanding issues in this case and place same in condition for allowance. If the Examiner has any questions or feels that a telephone or personal interview would be helpful in resolving any outstanding issues which remain in this application after consideration of this amendment, the Examiner is courteously invited to telephone the undersigned and the same would be gratefully appreciated.

It is submitted that the claims as amended herein patentably define over the art relied on by the Examiner and early allowance of same is courteously solicited.

If any fees are required in connection with this case, it is respectfully requested that they be charged to Deposit Account No. 02-0184.

Respectfully submitted,
Tokimi Nago et al.

By

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I, Rachel Piscitelli, hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: "Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313" on May 8, 2006.

Rachel Piscitelli